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#### OPERATIONAL PLANNING IN POLISH COMMUNICATIONS

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In People's Poland the chief function of communications should be service to the socialized economy, state administration, and the greatest possible mass of the community. The continuous development of the country's economic life and the creation of new organs of the people's government make constantly greater demands on communications.

Reduction to a minimum of the time required for mail delivery and for long-distance and local telephone calls will save an enormous number of working hours for the state economy and assure greater efficiency to the authorities central administrations, and production enterprises.

There are two means of improving the quality of communication services: investments and more efficient use of existing possibilities.

Improvement solely by means of investment outlays seems unjustifiable. In a socialized economy it is necessary to strive for the most economical and efficient use of financial media, with maximum utilization of the existing manpower and equipment potential. There is no doubt that unused reserves exist in the PPTiT (Polska Poczta Telegraf i Telefon, Polish Mail, Telegraph, and Telephone). The initiative of workers at all levels should reveal these reserves.

Improved quality of services through better utilization of unused reserves can be achieved by planning of operations. The plan for the year is broken down into monthly and quarterly periods after a thorough analysis of the nature of services required during the respective months. The seasonal pattern of certain services is adjusted according to the trend of growth.

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Planning of operations that is merely quantitative, however, is only a half-way measure. It does not draw up any regulations, nor present the communications worker with definite tasks. It cannot mobilize the workers in an efficient manner to fulfill the plan since the amount of mail delivery and telephone conversations is not controlled by the workers but by the customers.

The problem of operational planning in communications cannot be compared with operational planning in industry, where monthly and quarterly tasks set at the beginning of a given year can be raised from month to month or from week to week by mobilizing the worker to fulfill increased tasks.

In communications, workers cannot influence the quantity of services but can influence the quality of these services. Therefore, operational planning should aim for constant improvement in the quality of these services by shortening of the average time of mail and telegram delivery and for placing long-distance calls, by decreasing the percentage of incompleting calls caused by technical failures, by decreasing the percentage of lost mail, etc. There should be maximum use of local telephone exchanges and more efficient use of automotive vehicles, etc. Telephone and mail service should be extended to rural areas and new postal and telecommunications offices set up.

Simplification of handling procedures will result in better service, better utilization of manpower, and bring employees into closer contact with the customer.

Since field work in planning and reporting is still inadequate, an excessive development of subject matter for planning is not warranted.

In view of the technical difficulty of determining certain indexes for each month, the general content of monthly plans should differ from that of quarterly plans. The monthly plan should not be too detailed at first, but a detailed quarterly plan should be attempted. The first-quarter period should be sufficient for statistical investigation and reporting.

Operational planning should be applied to all levels of PPTiT. The central authority should assign tasks based on results planned by the regional administrations. These, in turn, should be based on the plans of subsidiary installations.

On the central level, furthermore, some tasks pertinent to special regions could be taken into consideration, as for example, those of Warsaw (as the seat of central authorities), the Lublin and Rzeszow wojewodztwo (because of the notable backwardness of these areas), etc. This will permit improvement in communications in specified areas.

A well-developed operational plan that considers the subject matter and scope of the tasks involved will be an important instrument in securing better quality in mail and telephone services and better adaptation of personnel to the increasing demands of the growing national economy. The operational plan should be publicized among the workers to mobilize them for the attainment and surpassing of the plan. Respective categories of workers must be informed of their role so that their performance will reflect complete knowledge of their tasks.

However, to insure the efficacy of the operational plan, it is necessary to have an efficient reporting system which now is far from adequate. To improve the reporting system, uniform terminology must be adopted, and the method of statistical tabulation should be worked out in detail. Workers concerned should be thoroughly familiarized with these methods. Good reporting is a prerequisite for economic planning. Incorrect reporting can distort the meaning of operational planning.

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In the initial stages, extensive operational planning will meet with difficulties resulting primarily from inadequate preparation for lower-level planning and reporting. These difficulties must be overcome by teaching workers in planning and reporting activities and by impressing upon them the significance of the operational role in communications for other sectors of the national economy.

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